

meet overfishing and rebuilding requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. These management measures may include, but are not limited to, continued reductions of fishing effort or numbers of traps, increases in minimum or decreases in maximum size, increases in the escape vent size, decreases in the lobster trap size, closed areas, closed seasons, landing limits, trip limits and other management area-specific measures as may be identified and recommended by the Commission prior to December 1 of the previous year. After considering public comment, NMFS may publish a final rule to implement any such measures.

(b) *Conservation equivalency measures.* The Regional Administrator may consider future recommendations for modifications to Federal regulations based on conservation equivalency for American lobster that are formally submitted to him/her in writing by the ASMFC. These recommendations must, for consideration by the Regional Administrator, contain the following supporting information:

(1) A description of how Federal regulations should be modified;

(2) An explanation of how the recommended measure(s) would achieve a level of conservation benefits for the resource equivalent to the applicable Federal regulations;

(3) An explanation of how Federal implementation of the conservation equivalent measure(s) would achieve ISFMP objectives, be consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act national standards, and be compatible with the effective implementation of the ISFMP; and

(4) A detailed analysis of the biological, economic, and social impacts of the recommended conservation equivalent measure(s). After considering the recommendation and the necessary supporting information, NMFS may issue a proposed rule to implement the conservation equivalent measures. After considering public comment, NMFS may issue a final rule to implement such measures.

(c) At any other time, NMFS may publish a proposed rule, after consultation with the Commission, to implement any additional or different management measures in order to achieve ISFMP objectives or be compatible with Commission measures or recommendations or to be consistent with the national standards of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, or to meet overfishing and rebuilding requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. After considering public comments, NMFS may publish a final rule to implement any such measures.

(d) Notwithstanding other provisions of this part, NMFS may publish any additional or different management measures as described herein without prior public comment, pursuant to and consistent with 5 U.S.C. 553.

[64 FR 68248, Dec. 6, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 14931, Mar. 27, 2003]

**§ 697.26 EEZ Nearshore Management Area 5 Trap Waiver.**

(a) *Eligibility.* Vessels eligible for limited access lobster permits under § 697.4(a)(1) and limited access black sea bass permits under § 648.4(a)(7)(i) of this chapter may request an Area 5 Trap Waiver Permit, under the procedures described in § 697.4.

(b) *Restrictions.* A vessel issued an Area 5 Trap Waiver permit under this section may engage in trap fishing for black sea bass in EEZ Nearshore Management Area 5 and is exempt from the provisions of § 697.19 and § 697.21 if such fishing is conducted in accordance with all other provisions of this section and all other Federal and state laws and regulations applicable to lobster and black sea bass fishing.

(1) A vessel issued a permit under this section may retain, land and sell an incidental allowance of lobster equal to the non-trap harvest restrictions specified in § 697.17(a).

(2) A vessel issued a permit under this section may not possess on board or deploy bait or baited traps.

[66 FR 14502, Mar. 13, 2001]